TL906

Hearing on Human Rights in ASEAN
Düsseldorf 3 May 1988

Statement by Cristiano Costa
Political refugee from East Timor

Honorable chair, members of the EEC and ASEAN community, representatives of European and ASEAN NGOs and honorable public

On this important occasion I want to use this opportunity to explain a little bit about my experiences and views about the matter of East Timor.

I fled from East Timor at the end of 1987 because of the severe oppression of the people of East Timor by the Indonesian armed forces. My experiences are also reflected in my oral statement in front of the UN Commission on Human Rights in Geneva during its last session held in March 1988 (44th session, item 12) as a direct victim of the Indonesian military occupation of East Timor from the start until I managed to escape abroad.

Since the invasion of the Indonesian military in East Timor many forms of violence have been used against the people and many, besides me, have testified that the war has resulted into a loss of 200.000 lives of innocent East Timorese.

As an addition I want to add some views about the present situation :

- Over the years, increasingly the Indonesian military is creating an atmosphere of fear among the population of East Timor and is therefore intensely hated by the people.
- The end of the conflict in East Timor can only be resolved through a proper dialogue held between:

1. The Portugese Government as the officially recognised administrating power over East Timor.
2. The Indonesian Government as the power who is at present the occupying power in East Timor.
3. The dialogue held under the auspices of the UN Secretary-

General, conforming the adopted resolution 30/37, September 1982.

4. As part of the consultation also the guerilla forces including the political representatives UDT/Fretilin abroad, who have developed a national coalition.

Honorable Chair and dear friends,

I'm delivering this last point as it is a crucial factor for the peace-process in East Timor and for the stability of the whole Asia-Pacific region. We all know that both the Indonesian army or the armed resistance in East Timor cannot solve the conflict in a military way and will only ~~a d~~ bring the East Timorese people into further disasters and misery. With the reference that one third of the people of East Timor were murdered by the Indonesian occupation, I want to use the opportunity to repeat my statement made for the UN Commission on Human Rights last March :

Before I end this statement and my humble point of view, I want to thank you all in name of the suffering people of East Timor from the bottom of our hearts for the opportunity and attention given to the fate of the East Timorese.

Thank you.